Stan Lee Presents:
WATER
IF A SHATTERED UNDERSEA BASE EXPLODES TO THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN... AND THERE'S NO ONE ALIVE TO HEAR IT...
...DOES IT MAKE A NOISE?
THE ANSWER IS: YES. A NOISE SOMETHING LIKE THIS...
SPLASH
PETER DAVID WRITER
ANDREW WILDMAN PENCILERS
RON LIM
STEPHEN BASKERVILLE INKERS
HARRY CANDELARIO
KEN LOPEZ LETTERER
MEGAN McDOWELL COLORIST
MALIBU COLOR SEPS
JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE EXECUTIVE EDITOR
BOB HARRAS CHIEF

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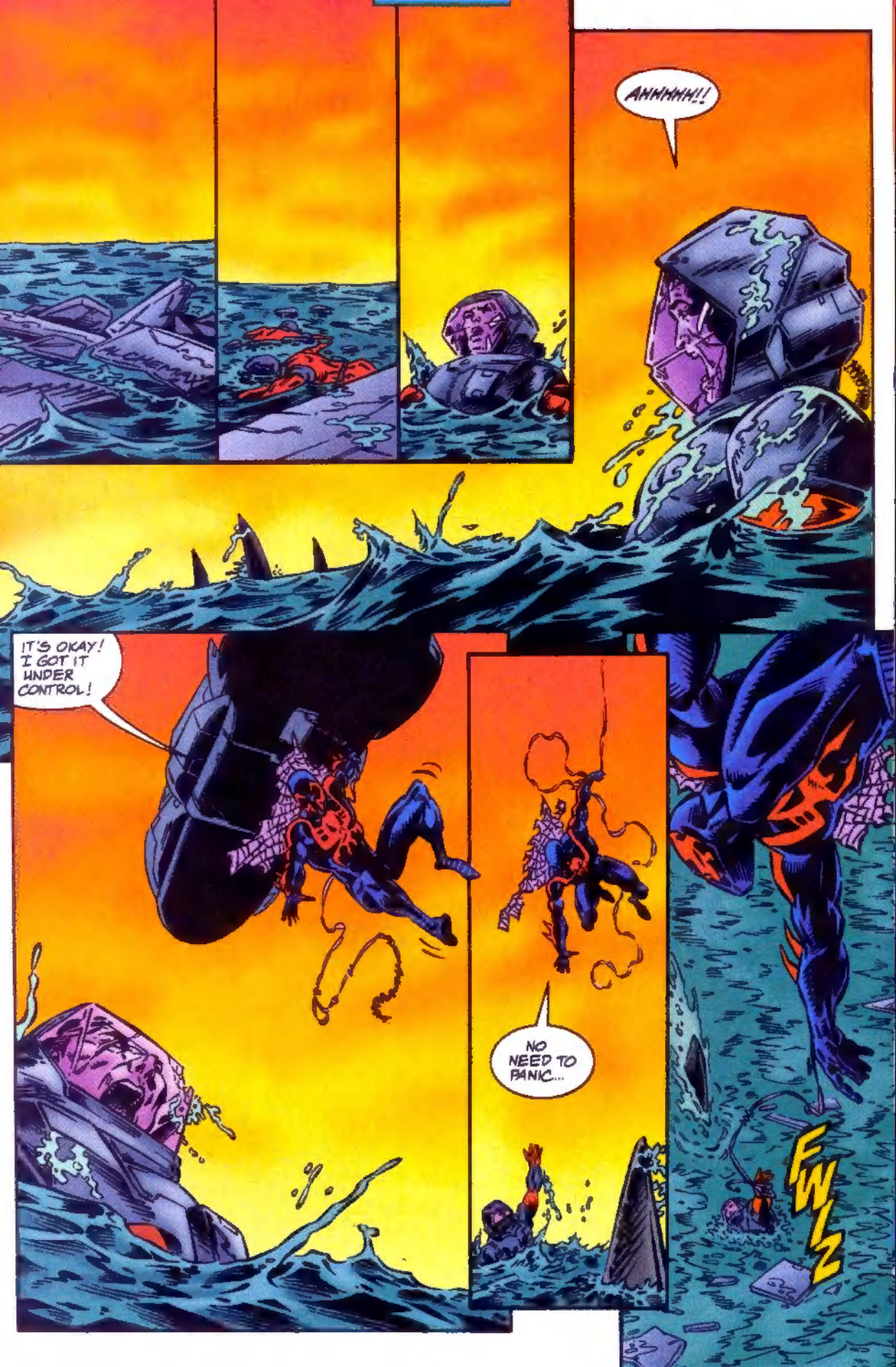
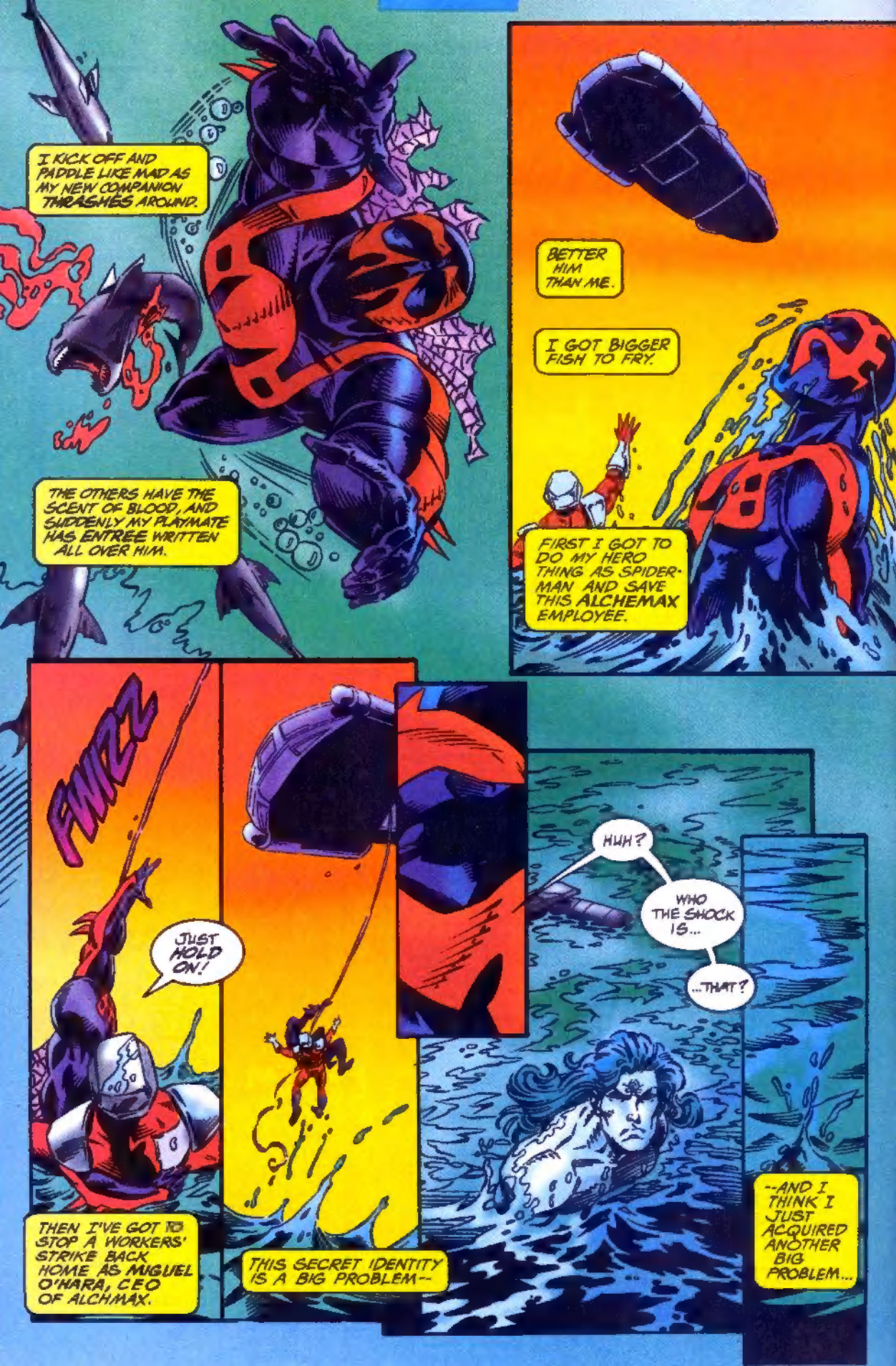

AHHHHH!!
IT'S OKAY! I GOT IT UNDER CONTROL!
NO NEED TO PANIC...
FWIZ

COULD YOU HAVE CUT IT ANY SHOCKIN' THINNER?!
INGRATE.
I TOLD YOU THERE'S NO NEED TO...
...PANIC!!

ALCHEMAX CORP...
MA, ARE YOU CRAZY?!
WHY, YES. WHY ARE YOU ASKING? I THOUGHT WE WERE ALL PRETTY MUCH AGREED ON THAT.
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN! HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY WORK FOR MIGUEL, WHOM YOU'VE ALWAYS SAID YOU CAN'T STAND... AS PART OF ALCHEMAX, A COMPANY YOU HATE?
I'VE ALWAYS HAD A LOT OF... ANGER BOTTLED UP WHEN IT COMES TO MIGUEL. BUT I'VE MANAGED TO "BLOW SOME OFF" RECENTLY.
AND NOW I HAVE A CERTAIN DEGREE TO MAKE UP TO HIM.
HE NEEDS ME.
WHAT MY BROTHER NEEDS IS A SWIFT KICK.
WELL, MAYBE MY BEING HERE IS THE SAME THING.
BZZZ
MIGUEL O'HARA'S OFFICE... OH. HELLO, BORN.
AH... O'HARA'S FORMIDABLE GUARDIAN.
YOUR BOSS HAS OUR LIST OF DEMANDS. I WISH TO SPEAK WITH HIM TO LEARN HOW HIS "CONSIDERATIONS" ARE GOING.
I'D PUT YOU THROUGH IF HE WERE HERE. BUT HE'S IN CONFERENCE.

IF IT WEREN'T FOR MY ACCELERATED VISION, I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO PENETRATE THE HAZE OF THE WATER AND SEE THIS MONSTER'S JAWS COMING AT ME.
MY LUNGS ARE SCREAMING FOR AIR...
...AND THEN I WANT TO START SCREAMING, TOO...
BECAUSE COMPANY IS COMING.
STILL, WE ARE TALKING SHARKS HERE...
AND THE NEW ARRIVALS MIGHT PROVE MY END...
...OR MY SALVATION...
...AS MY TALONS TAKE A PIECE OUT OF MY OPPONENT.

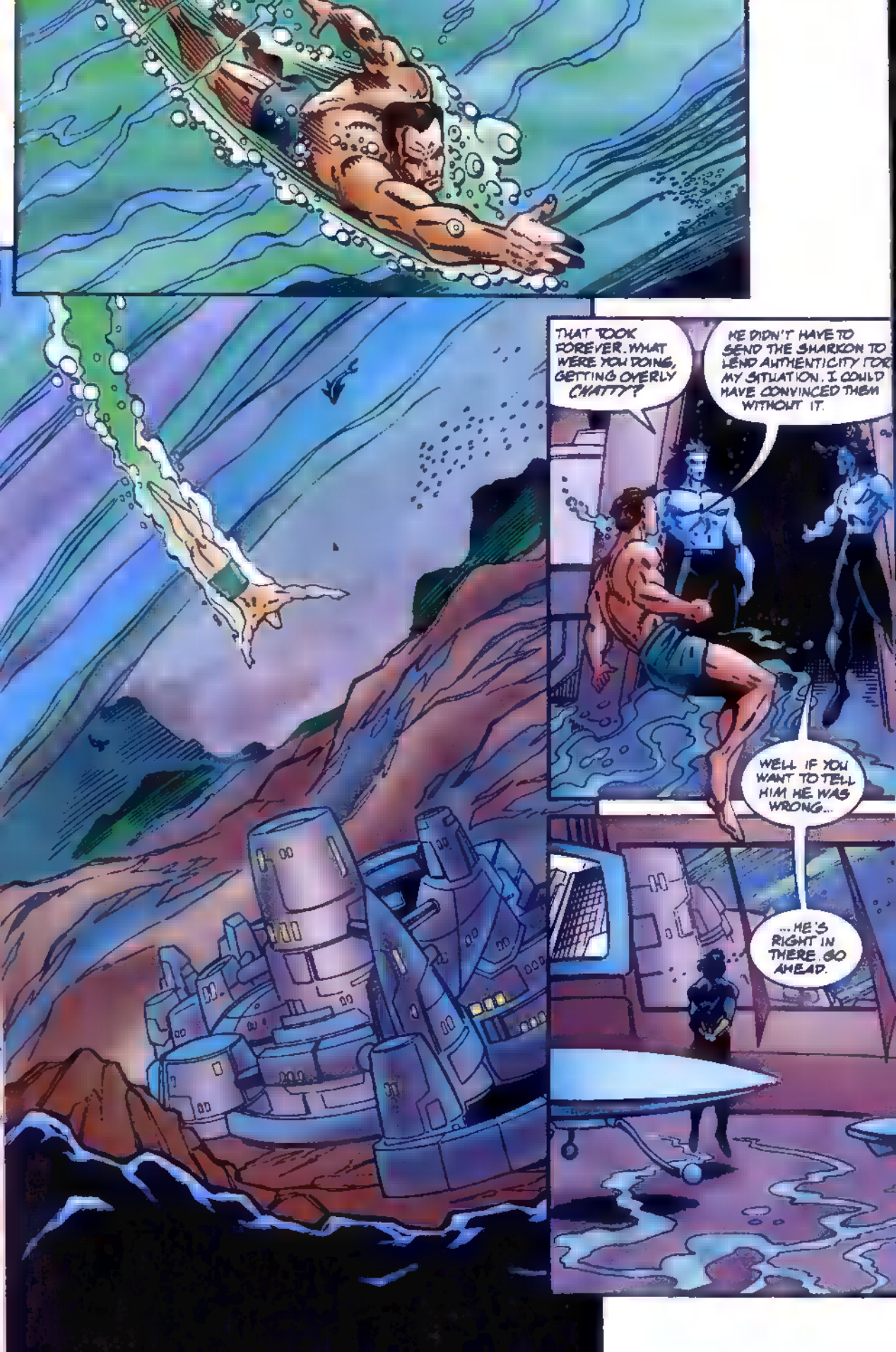

I KICK OFF AND PADDLE LIKE MAD AS MY NEW COMPANION THRASHES AROUND.
THE OTHERS HAVE THE SCENT OF BLOOD, AND SUDDENLY MY PLAYMATE HAS ENTREE WRITTEN ALL OVER HIM.
BETTER HIM THAN ME.
I GOT BIGGER FISH TO FRY.
FIRST I GOT TO DO MY HERO THING AS SPIDER-MAN AND SAVE THIS ALCHEMAX EMPLOYEE.
FWIZZZ
JUST HOLD ON!
THEN I'VE GOT TO STOP A WORKERS' STRIKE BACK HOME AS MIGUEL O'HARA, CEO OF ALCHMAX.
THIS SECRET IDENTITY IS A BIG PROBLEM--
HUH?
WHO THE SHOCK IS...
...THAT?
--AND I THINK I JUST ACQUIRED ANOTHER BIG PROBLEM...

CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED?
MIGUEL O'HARA HAD SENT YOU PEOPLE IN AN EXPLORATORY VESSEL TO SEE WHY WE'D LOST TOUCH WITH NEW ATLANTIS...
...AND THEN HE SENT ME WHEN WE LOST TOUCH WITH YOU...
OH, WE FOUND OUT ALL RIGHT.
WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN. SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT COMING.
THE NEW ATLANTIS PROJECT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE BOLD NEW DIRECTION IN UNDERSEA EXPLORATION. EXPLORING AND EXPLOITING THE OCEAN DEPTHS.
HUMANS LIVING IN AIRTIGHT DOMICILES WHILE GENETICALLY DESIGNED UNDERSEA MUTATES DID ALL THE HEAVY-DUTY OUTSIDE WORK.
IT WAS THE IDEAL SITUATION... AS LONG AS THE CONCEPT OF SLAVERY DIDN'T BOTHER ANYBODY.
UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE INHABITANTS OF NEW ATLANTIS, IT STARTED TO BOTHER THE MUTATES... A LOT.

THEY RALLIED AROUND ONE IN PARTICULAR... THE MOST DYNAMIC AND FORCEFUL OF THEM.
HE CALLED HIMSELF "ROMAN" IN IMITATION OF THE LEGENDARY NAMOR THE SUB-MARINER.
THE HUMANS THOUGHT THAT SERVITUDE HAD BEEN INDELIBLY BRED INTO THE MUTATES.
THEY WERE WRONG.
THE HUMANS WHO FOUGHT BACK... DIED. A HANDFUL WERE KEPT BY THE MUTATES FOR... HIDEOUS EXPERIMENTS. THE REST WERE ALLOWED TO LEAVE, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT ANY WHO TRIED TO RETAKE ATLANTIS WOULD BE KILLED.
MR. STONE ORDERED A COUNTER-OFFENSIVE TO BE LAUNCHED. WE...
I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO SURVIVED.
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NOW, S-MAN? WHAT DO YOU THINK MR. O'HARA IS GOING TO DO?
OUR OVERSEAS INVESTORS ARE VERY CONCERNED OVER THIS NEW ATLANTIS BUSINESS. THEY'RE WORRIED THE MUTATES WILL ATTACK THE U.S./EUROPE TUNNEL.
THEY'RE ALSO WORRIED THAT ANY VESSEL CROSSING THE ATLANTIC--ABOVE, ON OR BELOW THE SEA--IS FAIR GAME.
THEY'VE DECLARED INDEPENDENCE FOR THEMSELVES. SHOULD WE PENALIZE THEM FOR THAT?
WELL. I'M NOT SURE. I KNOW HE WAS IN THIS BIG MEETING WITH SOME HIGH-POWERED BUSINESS TYPES... BUT I, UHM... DON'T KNOW WHAT WAS SAID... THOUGH I'VE HEARD RUMORS...
AS I RECALL, A FEW HUNDRED YEARS AGO, AMERICA DID THE SAME THING.

AND THE BRITISH DIDN'T SIMPLY SHRUG AND TURN AWAY. THEY FOUGHT BACK TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR COLONY.
BUT THEY DID THE WRONG THING!
NO, THEY DID THE RIGHT THING. IT JUST TURNED OUT WRONG... FOR THEM. THE POINT IS, SOMETHING MUST BE DONE.
O'HARA SAN... BE AWARE THAT STARK-FUJIKAWA AIDED ALCHEMAX IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ATLANTIS.
WE HAVE A VESTED INTEREST, AND I SUGGEST YOU RECTIFY THE SITUATION... IMMEDIATELY.
IT WOULD NOT BE ADVANTAGEOUS FOR YOU, SHOULD WE DECIDE YOU DO NOT CARE ABOUT OUR COMPANY'S FINANCIAL CONCERNS.
IS THAT A THREAT, HIKARU-SAMA?
A THREAT? NO, OF COURSE NOT. MERELY...
...AN OBSERVATION WITH POTENTIALLY DIRE CONSEQUENCES.
SO WHAT'S MR. O'HARA GOING TO DO? WILL HE LEAVE NEW ATLANTIS ALONE?
I DON'T THINK THAT'LL BE AN OPTION FROM...WHAT I HEAR...
HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO FORCE THE MUTATES OF NEW ATLANTIS TO TURN CONTROL OF THE CITY BACK TO ALCHEMAX.

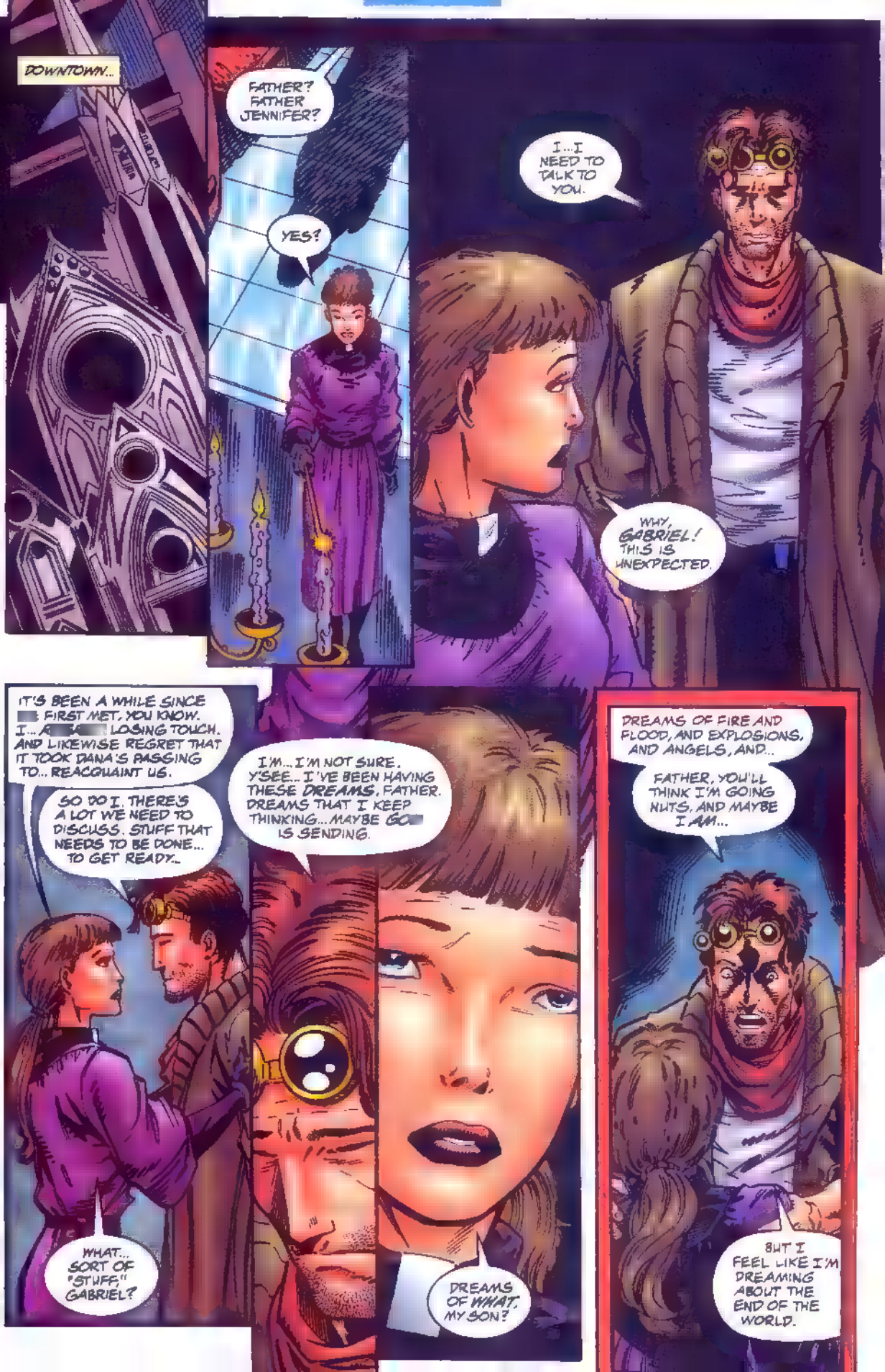
THEY'LL NEVER DO IT.
THEY'LL HAVE TO. IT'S NOT THEIR CITY, AND I THINK THEY WON'T BE ALLOWED TO KEEP IT.
THERE'RE TOO MANY PEOPLE WHOSE NOSES WILL BE OUT OF JOINT. BUT DON'T WORRY.. IT'S NOT GOING TO BE YOUR CONCERN.
ACTUALLY...
...IT IS!
NO! JUST COMPLETING MY MISSION!
LONG LIVE NEW ATLANTIS! LONG LIVE THE SUB-MARINER!
HEY! HAVE YOU GONE NUTS?
I TOLD YOU SOME HUMANS WERE KEPT FOR EXPERIMENTS! AND WE CAME TO UNDERSTAND THE RIGHTNESS OF THE MUTATES!
I WILL INFORM ROMAN OF YOUR ANSWER. AND I'LL WAGER, IN SHORT ORDER, YOU'LL HAVE HIS!
BUT I WASN'T GIVING AN OFFICIAL ANSWER! JUST THINKING OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD!
MR. O'HARA MIGHT CHANGE HIS...
...MIND.
TERRIFIC.


THAT TOOK FOREVER. WHAT WERE YOU DOING, GETTING OVERLY CHATTY?
HE DIDN'T HAVE TO SEND THE SHARKON TO LEND AUTHENTICITY TO MY SITUATION. I COULD HAVE CONVINCED THEM WITHOUT IT.
WELL IF YOU WANT TO TELL HIM HE WAS WRONG...
...HE'S RIGHT IN THERE. GO AHEAD.

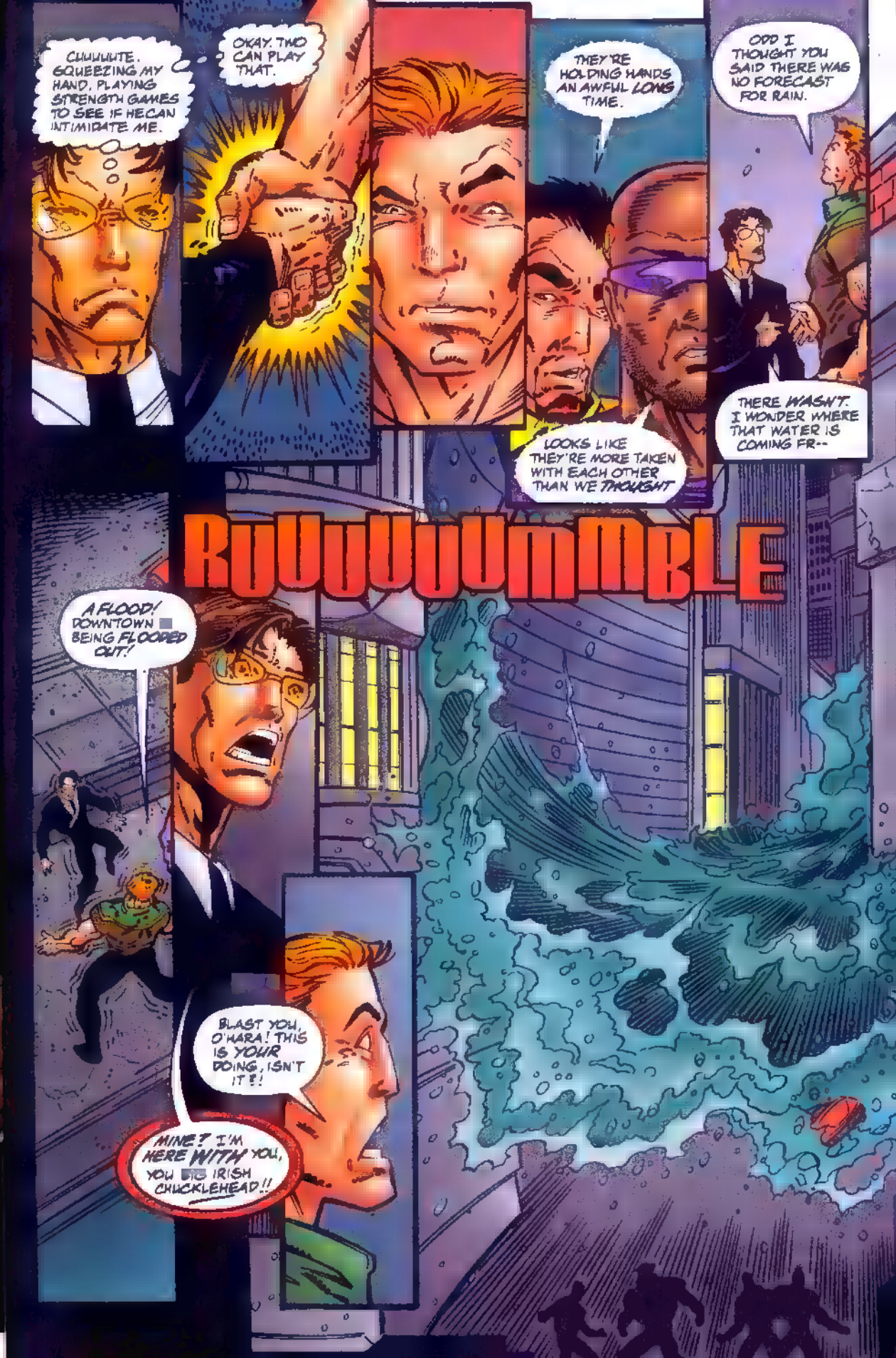
UHM... SIR? I'M BACK...
YES, I KNOW. LET ME GUESS...
ALCHEMAX WILL NOT [redacted] US GO. THEY WILL CONTINUE TO [redacted] US UNTIL [redacted] SUBMIT TO THEIR AUTHORITY.
THAT IS CERTAINLY SPIDER-MAN'S IMPRESSION.
AH YES, SPIDER-MAN. THE NEWS PROGRAMS HAVE TOLD US MUCH OF HIM.
ALLY OF FORMER PRESIDENT DOOM. PUBLIC FACE, IT SEEMS, OF ALCHEMAX.
A CENTURY AGO, THE MIGHTY [redacted] ENGAGED IN THE SAME SUBTERFUGE [redacted] WHICH I SENT YOU:
HE GAINED ENTRANCE TO THE SURFACE [redacted] DISGUISED AS ONE OF THEM. [redacted] THE HUMANS BOASTED HOW THEY WOULD MAKE ATLANTIS AND ITS ARROGANT RULER SUBMIT.
I KNOW ALL THIS [redacted] HE LEFT A RECORD OF HIS LIFE... A CHRONICLE, IF YOU WILL... OF HIS LIFE AND TIMES. A LEGACY UPON WHICH I'VE MODELLED MYSELF.
WHAT DID NAMOR DO WHEN HE LEARNED OF THE SURFACE WORLD'S INTENTIONS?
HE TAUGHT THEM A LESSON.
ONE THEY WOULD NEVER FORGET.

SO, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, MR. O'HARA?
I REALLY DON'T SEE MUCH CHOICE.
WE'RE OF THE SAME MIND THEN, SIR. I'LL PREPARE MAJOR STRIKE TROOPS.
YOU'LL DO NO SUCH THING. I'M OPENING PEACE TALKS WITH THEM.
I... BEG YOUR PARDON, SIR?
YOU HEARD ME.
BUT... THEY'RE MUTATES! THEY'RE NOT EVEN HUMAN!
IT'S LIKE DEALING WITH A [redacted] UPRISING BY TALKING TO THE COW INSTEAD OF SLAUGHTERING IT!
I DISAGREE. MUTATES AREN'T [redacted] ANIMALS.
THEY'RE NOT EXACTLY NORMAL HUMANS EITHER.
SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS AREN'T EXACTLY NORMAL HUMANS.
I FEEL OBLIGED TO TREAT THEM AS SOMETHING OTH[redacted] THAN FREAKS, THEY'RE SUBAQUATIC, NOT SUBHUMAN.
WE'LL ARRANGE A VIDEO SIT-DOWN AND [redacted] WHAT CAN [redacted] WORKED OUT, IN A WAY THAT WILL KEEP OUR VARIOUS ALLIES HAPPY.
IF WE CAN CONVINCE NEW ATLANTIS TO DO WHAT WE WANT OF THEIR OWN VOLITION, I'D RATHER GO IN THAT DIRECTION. THAT'S ALL, GENTLEMEN.

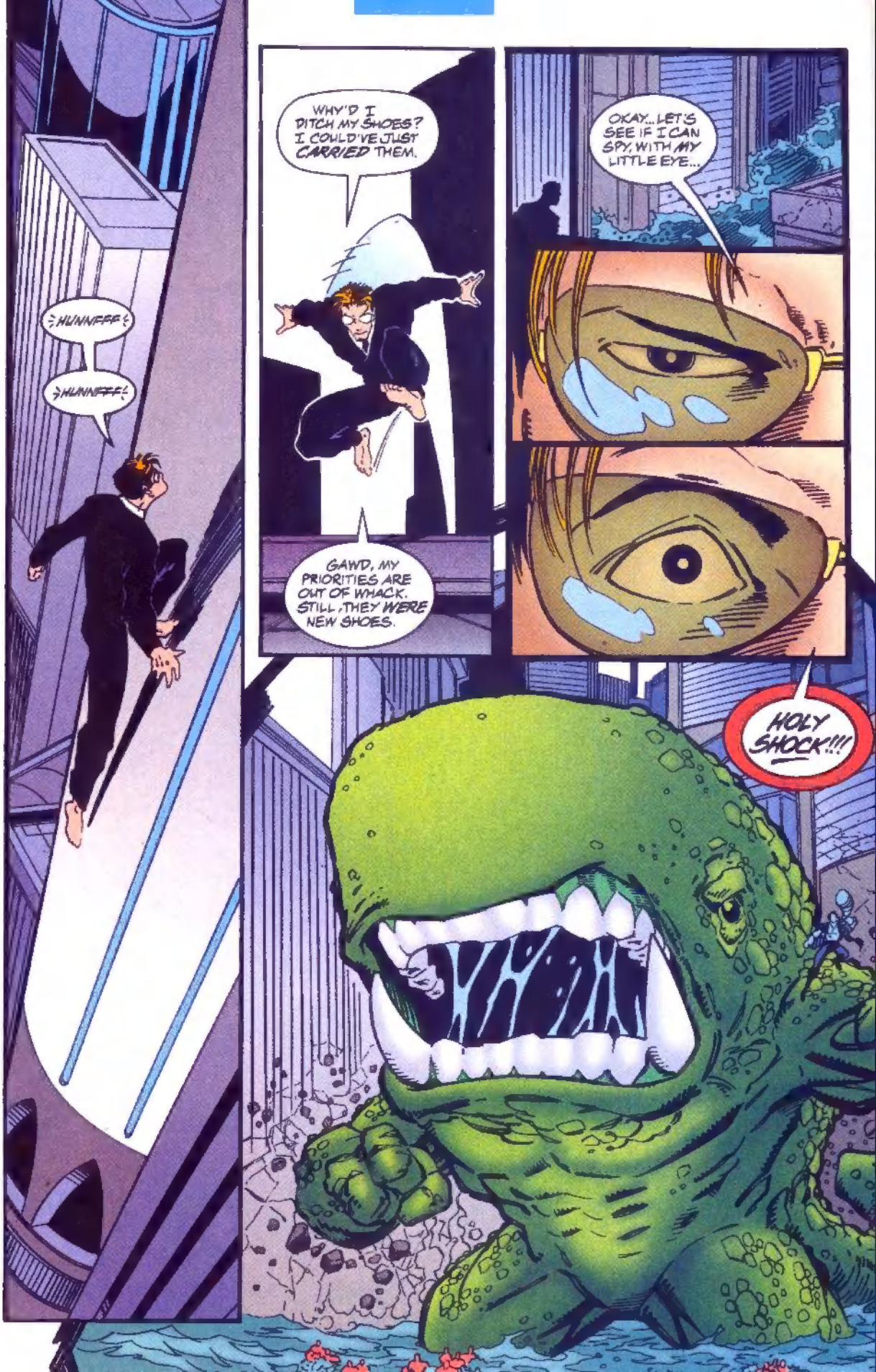
BUT MR. O'HARA, THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
I AGREE, SIR, ITS A FOOLHARDY AND DANGEROUSLY--
GENTLEMEN, I BELIEVE HE SAID..
...THAT'S ALL.
YES, MA'AM.
SORRY, MA'AM.
BORU WANTS TO MEET WITH YOU. FIND OUT HOW HIS CONCERNS ARE BEING ADDRESSED.
TELL HIM I'LL BE THERE THIS AFTERNOON.
WHAT? MIGUEL, YOU SHOULD HAVE HIM COME HERE. DON'T GIVE UP YOUR HOME ADVANTAGE. IF--
MA, THE LAST THING TO DO IS THINK OF THIS PLACE AS MY HOME.
NOW SET UP THE MEETING.
YES, SIR.


DOWNTOWN...
FATHER? FATHER JENNIFER?
YES?
I...I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
WHY, GABRIEL! THIS IS UNEXPECTED.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE [redacted] FIRST MET, YOU KNOW. I... A[redacted] LOSING TOUCH. AND LIKEWISE REGRET THAT IT TOOK DANA'S PASSING TO... REACQUAINT US.
SO DO I. THERE'S A LOT WE NEED TO DISCUSS. STUFF THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE... TO GET READY...
WHAT... SORT OF "STUFF," GABRIEL?
I'M... I'M NOT SURE. Y'SEE... I'VE BEEN HAVING THESE DREAMS, FATHER. DREAMS THAT I KEEP THINKING... MAYBE GO[redacted] IS SENDING.
DREAMS OF WHAT, MY SON?
DREAMS OF FIRE AND FLOOD, AND EXPLOSIONS, AND ANGELS, AND..
FATHER, YOU'LL THINK I'M GOING NUTS, AND MAYBE I AM...
BUT I FEEL LIKE I'M DREAMING ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD.

I'M MAKING A MISTAKE I'M MAKING A MISTAKE I'M MAKING A MISTAKE
NO, I'M NOT.
I'M MAKING A BIIIIIIIG MISTAKE
AND WORST OF ALL, I'M TALKING TO MYSELF.
STILL NO SIGHT OF O'HARA'S LIMO, BORIS. WE'VE GOT SPOTTING POINTS ALL OVER.
[redacted] MEETING HE REQUESTED IS TO BE IN TWO MINUTES. AH WELL ...I EXPECTED SUCH CHILD LIKE BEHAVIOR FROM HIM.
HE JUST WANTS TO YANK US AROUND, TO SHOW HOW MUCH BETTER THAN [redacted] HE IS.
SOON WE'LL BE INFORMED THAT HE SENDS HIS [redacted] THAT [redacted] WISHES IT'D BEEN WORTH HIS TIME TO...
YOU KNOW, YOU GOT A MAJOR LEAGUE CHIP ON YOUR SHOULDER? WHAT HAPPENED, DID IT FALL OFF FROM YOUR HEAD?
YOU? HOW DID YOU GET HERE? WHERE'S YOUR LIMO?
[redacted] WALKED. IT'S LOVELY TODAY WITH NO ACID RAIN EXPECTED. AND THE LIMO SEEMS KIND OF PRETENTIOUS DON'T YOU THINK?
AYE, I THINK THAT INDEED.
WELCOME TO DOWNTOWN, MR. O'HARA.


CHUUUUTE. SQUEEZING MY HAND, PLAYING STRENGTH GAMES TO SEE IF HE CAN INTIMIDATE ME.
OKAY. TWO CAN PLAY THAT.
THEY'RE HOLDING HANDS AN AWFUL LONG TIME.
ODD I THOUGHT YOU SAID THERE WAS NO FORECAST FOR RAIN.
THERE WASN'T. I WONDER WHERE THAT WATER IS COMING FR--
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE MORE TAKEN WITH EACH OTHER THAN WE THOUGHT
RUUUUUMBLE
A FLOOD! DOWNTOWN BEING FLOODED OUT!
BLAST YOU, O'HARA! THIS IS YOUR DOING, ISN'T IT?!
MINE? I'M HERE WITH YOU, YOU IRISH CHUCKLEHEAD!!

ELSEWHERE...
FATHER, LOOK! FIRE AND FLOOD! IT'S WHAT I WAS SAYING! I--
GABRIEL, SHUT UP AND GET IN HERE!!
AND FURTHER DOWNTOWN, AT CITY HALL...
HURRY! MOVE! EVERYBODY IN?!
WHERE'S O'HARA?!
I DIDN'T SEE HIM!
WELL I HOPE HE'S IN HERE, BECAUSE IF HE'S OUT THERE...
HE HASN'T GOT A SNOWBALL'S CHANCE IN H--


HUNNFFF!
HUNNFFF!
WHY'D I DITCH MY SHOES? I COULD'VE JUST CARRIED THEM.
GAWD, MY PRIORITIES ARE OUT OF WHACK. STILL, THEY WERE NEW SHOES.
OKAY... LET'S SEE IF I CAN SPY, WITH MY LITTLE EYE...
HOLY SHOCK!!!

EARTHQUAKE!!!
NO.
SEAQUAKE.
WE WISHED MERELY TO BE LEFT TO OURSELVES! BUT THAT WAS INSUFFICIENT FOR YOU!
--UUUFFFF!!!
SO NOW, WE MUTATES HAVE DECIDED THAT WE SHALL RULE YOU INSTEAD!
SO SWEARS ROMAN THE FIRST, THE SUB-MARIN--

YOU IDIOT! YOU'VE RUINED EVERYTHING!
ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS WAIT! YOU--
AND THEN A CASCADE OF WATER FOUNTAINS DOWNWARD, INUNDATING THEM, DRIVING THEM BELOW THE SURFACE...

RRRAARR
AND SUDDENLY, BOTH SPIDER-MAN AND THE SUB-MARINER FIND THEMSELVES IN VERY REAL DANGER OF BEING...
...TERMINALLY UNDERFOOT.
TO BE CONCLUDED!